

# GENERAL PLAN PROGRESS

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN



## ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005-06

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING



**GENERAL PLAN PROGRESS**  
ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL PLAN  
2005-06 FISCAL YEAR

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING  
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

VICTOR HOLANDA, AICP, DIRECTOR

OUR MISSION:

PROMOTING THE WISE USE OF LAND

HELPING TO BUILD GREAT COMMUNITIES

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
DECEMBER 19, 2006

# **COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO**

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# ***Introduction***

This report reviews the activities that took place to implement the County General Plan between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006. The General Plan is the guiding document for growth and development within the unincorporated area outside cities. It is charged with meeting California laws that regulate land use planning and development, and this report fulfills a state requirement to provide a way to measure progress in implementing the plan.

The scope of the report includes,

1. Major planning activities that were begun, worked on or completed,
2. Changes to the plan and ordinances to implement plan policies,
3. Private and public development and division of land, and
4. Residential development in relation to Housing Element goals.

**The County of San Luis Obispo** is a “local” government that serves over 100,000 people within the unincorporated area (outside incorporated cities) who are distributed among at least 10 communities and a rural area of over 3,000 square miles. It is required by the State of California to protect resources, plan an orderly distribution of land uses and apply fair and equitable regulations for new development. The following county mission statement provides the context for these activities:

***The County’s elected representatives and employees are committed to serve the community with pride to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life in San Luis Obispo County.***

Several guiding principles are key approaches to serving the community:

*Sense of Pride   Aim for Excellence   Respect for Others   Response to Change*

*Fiscal Responsibility   Community Service*

**The Department of Planning and Building** provides services within several roles, as visionary, statistician, designer, regulator and protector of public health, safety and welfare, to name a few. All of these roles are summarized within the department’s mission:

***Promoting the wise use of land***

***Helping build great communities***

Within all of its roles, the department’s major responsibility is to serve the public with cost-effective and courteous actions, and to represent the public’s interest by creating fair and equitable policies and recommendations. These ethical commitments are the foundation of the recommendations and decisions of the Planning and Building Department. Key stakeholders are recognized below:

- The **Board of Supervisors** has the major role of governing implementation of the General Plan, through its appointments to the Planning Commission and other bodies, decisions on applications and proposed plan amendments, and direction that is given to set priorities and funding.

- The **clients** are applicants and public members who receive immediate and direct services from the department.
- The **general public**, as the “end-user” of the general plan, has the important role of shaping the purpose, meaning and effect of the General Plan. Through its participation in drafting, reviewing and commenting on plans, ordinances and permits, to staff and decision-makers who then choose how to express the community's needs and desires.
- The **employees** of county departments have varying roles implementing the General Plan, such as the Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Division, General Services Department. And, staff in non-county agencies, such as special districts, state and Federal agencies provide essential services, regulations and resource protection linked to the county's General Plan.

## Communitywide Results

In October of 2000, the Board of Supervisors adopted the following set of Communitywide Results that simply and succinctly describe a vision for the County – a place that is safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well governed. Each of these "results" will be tracked via a set of key indicators and published in a report every two years, the first of which was released in May 2001. For more information on the Communitywide Results, contact the County Administrative Office at 781-5011.

### A Safe Community

The County will strive to create a community where all people -- adults and children alike -- have a sense of security and well being, crime is controlled, fire and rescue response is timely, and roads are safe.

### A Healthy Community

The County will strive to ensure all people in our community enjoy healthy, successful and productive lives, and have access to the basic necessities.



Figure 1 CDF - County Fire Department



Figure 2 Community edge and agriculture  
Los Osos Valley

### A Livable Community

The County will strive to keep our community a good place to live by carefully managing growth, protecting our natural resources, promoting life-long learning, and creating an environment that encourages respect for all people.



Figure 3 Strasbaugh Building

### A Prosperous Community

The County will strive to keep our economy strong and viable and assure that all share in this economic prosperity.



## A Well Governed Community

The County will provide high-quality "results-oriented" services that are responsive to community desires.

**The General Plan** and the county's implementation activities provide values, data and policies to support measuring and improving these communitywide results. As communities of interest interact about population growth and development, values and information are shared that result in policies through city and county decision makers. The General Plan is where these values, policies and information to a great degree reside. Communities are increasingly interested in attending to the costs and impacts of population growth and development, and interactive models of future growth are becoming valuable tools for engaging communities and measuring progress toward these results.



Figure 4 Permit Center Open House

## The County General Plan

The General Plan is both the vision and blueprint for how the County as a community wants to develop and grow while protecting valued resources. **The General Plan provides policies for planning land uses and for allowing new development and land divisions.** It also is the vision for protecting special places such as the landmark Morros, essential uses such as agriculture, and resources such as air, water, and plant and animal habitats. Currently the General Plan includes the documents, called elements, shown in Table 1, which also includes brief information about their status and whether they are required or optional

State law requires that each city and county adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning."

Table 1.  
General Plan Elements

Element	Required or Optional	Date of Adoption or Last Major Revision	Comment
<b>Land Use</b> Framework for Planning	Required	1993	Framework for Planning is the core document; 5 of 13 area plans have been updated since 1980 as shown below:
<b>Area Plans:</b>			
Huasna-Lopez		1986	
South County		1994	
San Luis Obispo		1994	
Salinas River		1996	
El Pomar – Estrella		2003	
Estero		2004	Approved and submitted to California Coastal Commission

Element	Required or Optional	Date of Adoption or Last Major Revision	Comment
Cambria – San Simeon portion of North Coast		2005	Approved and submitted to California Coastal Commission
<b>Local Coastal Plan - Coastal Plan Policies</b>	Required	2004	Land Use Element for the Coastal Zone; implements the Coast Act
<b>Circulation</b>	Required	1986	Integrated with Land Use Element - Updated in the above area plans
<b>Housing</b>	Required	2004	Certified by the State in 2004
<b>Open Space*</b>	Required	1998	Updated as the Agriculture & Open Space Element
<b>Conservation</b>	Required	1974	Includes Historic and Esthetic Elements; update begun in 2006
<b>Noise</b>	Required	1992	
<b>Safety</b>	Required	1999	
<b>Master Water &amp; Sewer Plan</b>	Optional	1972	
<b>Energy*</b>	Optional	1995	
<b>Offshore Energy*</b>	Optional	1992	
<b>Economic</b>	Optional	1999	
<b>Recreation</b>	Optional	1968	Currently in revision
Note: * = Received outstanding plan award from American Planning Association			

## ***Major New Planning Activities***

### ***Update of the Conservation Element***

An update of the 1972 Conservation Element began in 2006 with a scope of work and initial background work. A major first step was to obtain a consultant to prepare a **Biological Database Assessment** to identify the validity of current information, for further refinement in subsequent studies. This project also implements several pending programs within the General Plan. The consultant was to conduct the inventory, make recommendations, and prepare a draft resource constraints map for use with computer geographic information system (GIS) technology.

### ***Implementing Smart Growth***

When the Board of Supervisors adopted Smart Growth Principles on June 7, 2005, they were implementing the County mission statement, *...to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life in San Luis Obispo County*. Smart Growth is a concept to balance these three concerns in all planning and service activity, in order to support well-planned growth and to avoid problems such as unforeseen outcomes and impacted communities. The following principles in Table 2 were adopted as the primary ways to organize planning with all three concerns in mind:

**Table 2.**  
**Smart Growth Principles**

1. Strengthen regional cooperation.
2. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and environmental areas.
3. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
5. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
6. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
7. Encourage mixed land uses.
8. Create walkable neighborhoods and towns.
9. Take advantage of compact building design.
10. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
11. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.

The Planning and Building Department initiated or continued several activities during fiscal year 2005-06 to implement the following principles:

### **Strengthen Regional Cooperation.**

The Planning and Building Department continued working with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, Air Pollution Control District and the Local Agency Formation Commission, in the **Community 2050** visioning effort. Four sub-regional workshops were held to determine concerns about specific issues, including housing, traffic congestion, preserving agriculture, open space and natural resources, competitive economy and fiscal resources. These workshops were followed by sub-regional meetings with elected officials to determine their concerns. Their support for a shared vision for the future in the Community 2050 process resulted in SLOCOG obtaining a state grant to refine regional technical land use information this Fall, and to hold public workshops in 2007 to develop a regional vision and preferred development scenarios. More information about this effort can be obtained at the Community 2050 website, <http://www.community2050.org/>, to learn more about past and upcoming events, or by contacting the SLOCOG office.

### **Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.**

The **Biological Database Assessment** (mentioned above) was begun to identify the adequacy of current databases about important biological resources, such as rare, endangered or threatened plants and wildlife. Areas with inadequate information will be proposed for further study in the 2006-07 fiscal year. A **Resource Constraints Map** was also begun that will integrate with the computer Land Use Planning Analysis model (see below) to indicate where conflicts may occur between resources and development allowed by the General Plan.

### **Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.**

Revisions to the foundation document for the Land Use Element and zoning, **Framework for Planning**, were begun to change the goals for planning and focus policies on urban infill

development and expansion, growth management and transportation, and measures that implement Smart Growth principles.

Development of a **Land Use Planning Analysis** computer model was also started, using geographic information system (GIS) technology (which uses a combination of maps and databases). This model of the county Land Use Element and zoning will provide the means to identify readily the major development characteristics of development and to prepare planning scenarios. The model will be used in conjunction with the resource constraints map noted above and a transportation model to depict future effects of the county General Plan and devise alternative land use scenarios to achieve Smart Growth principles.

### **Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.**

A **Community Separators Study** was begun to identify the extent of rural areas between communities that can contribute to a sense of place and community identity. The study will provide recommendations to maintain stable areas between communities and firm up identifiable community edges.

Planning staff developed a draft rating system for **Priority Processing of Smart Growth Projects** that demonstrate the principles of Smart Growth. Criteria were tested for rating projects, allowing for optional features to qualify projects for faster review. The system is due for release in the 2006-07 fiscal year.

Applicants and Community Advisory Councils have been engaged by staff to incorporate Smart Growth principles into project designs. Some communities have learned about alternative ways to achieve residential designs that are more compact and mixed with commercial development.

The Code Enforcement Division worked with residents of California Valley to remove over 320 abandoned cars and 13 tons of trash, and recycle 420 tons of metal. The vehicle abatement program also removed 172 abandoned cars from county roads.

### **Provide a variety of transportation choices.**

The Department of Public Works developed an update of the county Public Improvement Standards, in cooperation with the Planning and Building Department. The update focused on more integration of pedestrian and bicycle travel in street designs, as well as providing specific designs for transit stops. The adopted standards will result in more compatible transportation choices as the designs are utilized.

### **Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.**

The Housing Division created several concepts for increasing housing choices:

- Inclusionary housing policies, with an in-lieu housing fee for commercial/industrial development,
- A policy to require minimum residential densities in multi-family zones,
- Reduced minimum parcels sizes for subdivisions in Residential Single Family zones,
- New mixed-use housing/commercial standards, and
- Incentives to provide housing for low and moderate income households with rezonings.

An environmental impact report is being prepared for some of these concepts. A revision to the secondary dwelling ordinance was proposed to bring the scale of this development type closer to the affordable range of low and moderate income households.

## Encourage mixed land uses.

Applicants have been encouraged to provide a mix of commercial and housing uses within projects, with the result that several mixed-use projects have been approved.

## Create walkable neighborhoods and towns.

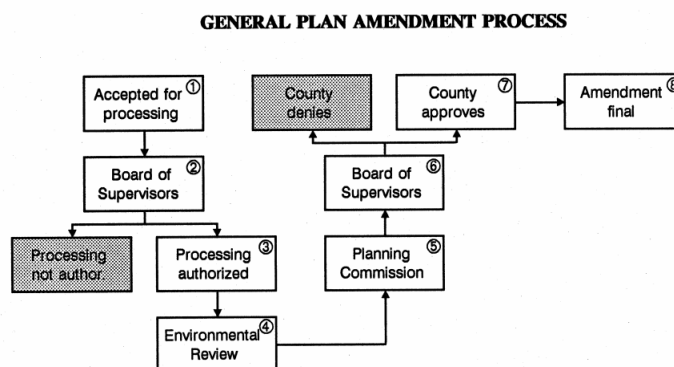
The updated **Public Improvement Standards** includes pedestrian-oriented street designs, especially on arterial streets. **Street and pathway improvement projects** have continued in several communities that create attractive pedestrian environments, in particular:

- The Main Street Enhancement Project in Cambria is nearing completion with landscaping within parkways and medians that is provided by the Cambria Land Conservancy,
- A boardwalk was extended on Moonstone Beach Drive in Cambria by the California Parks and Recreation Department,
- A linear park with landscaping and pedestrian path was developed by the County Public Works Department and the Parks and Recreation Division on a segment of El Moro Street right-of-way in Los Osos.

## General Plan Amendments

Changes or amendments to the General Plan occur through applications by the public or by the County after authorization to proceed by the Board of Supervisors. State law requires the General Plan to be kept current; updates are recommended to occur every five years. During Fiscal Year 2005-2006, the county *approved* a number of amendments as listed in Table

3. The county notably completed major revisions to the Port San Luis Master Plan and to the community plans for Cambria and San Simeon, which culminated several years of community involvement and input.



**Table 3**  
**General Plan Amendments Completed in FY 2005-06**

Type of Amendment	Planning Area	Change	Initiated by
Local Coastal Plan Amendment	San Luis Bay Avila Beach and Hartford Pier Area (requires CCC* approval)	Adopt the Port San Luis Master Plan into the County's General Plan	Applicant: Port San Luis Harbor District
Land Use Element Map and Ordinance Amendment	South County Nipomo Mesa	Change from Agriculture to Residential Rural	Applicant: Sejera
Land Use Element Map Amendment	Nacimientto Near the lake	Change from Open Space to Rural Lands and Rural Lands to Open Space	Applicant: Monterey Water Resources / Borges

Type of Amendment	Planning Area	Change	Initiated by
Local Coastal Plan Amendment	San Simeon / Cambria (requires CCC approval)	Update the San Simeon / Cambria portion of the North Coast Area Plan	County
Land Use Element Map and Ordinance Amendment	Salinas River San Miguel	Change from Agriculture to Residential Single Family and include in San Miguel URL	Applicant: Michaud
Land Use Element Map and Ordinance Amendment	South County Nipomo Mesa	Change from Residential Rural to Recreation and Public Facilities	Applicant: Craig

• California Coastal Commission

## *Implementing the General Plan*

Implementation of the General Plan includes a variety of regulating policies in ordinances, programs to develop needed public facilities, add services and commit public resources to building and maintaining streets, facilities and buildings.

### *Ordinance Amendments*

Ordinances implement the General Plan by regulating land use and development, such as the *Land Use Ordinance* (which is adopted as the zoning ordinance), or by managing the rate of growth as in the *Growth Management Ordinance*. Decisions to approve or deny permits or land divisions are based on these and other ordinances. The following amendments in Table 4 were adopted in fiscal year 2005-06, to review community growth rates, address water supplies on the Nipomo Mesa, and update regulations on parkland dedication and :

**Table 4**  
**Ordinance Amendments Completed in FY 2005-06**

Type of Amendment	Planning Area	Change	Initiated by
Growth Management Ordinance Amendment	Countywide	Los Osos/Cambria/ Nipomo Mesa growth rates	County
Land Use Ordinance Amendment	South County - Nipomo Mesa	Amend for supplemental water examination at time of a general plan amendment and fee at time of subdivision	County
Real Property Division Ordinance Amendment	Countywide	Update Quimby Ordinance	County
Building and Construction Ordinance Amendment	Countywide	Update regulations to reflect current Uniform Building Code requirements	County

## **Implementing Programs**

The General Plan is static unless its vision, goals and concepts are implemented in policies or projects on the ground. Each document or element of the General Plan contains programs to execute. Each area plan within the Land Use Element (LUE) includes programs for fulfilling needs for local services, transportation, resources and land use. Some of these programs have been prioritized by the Board of Supervisors with community input. Over 70 programs with the highest priority are outstanding at this time. A selected list of a dozen of these programs is shown in Table 5, to show the range of concerns and consideration. Some of these programs are on-going in some form.

During fiscal year 2005-06, the **Biological Database Assessment** was initiated as a first step to refine the quality and extent of resource data through more specific efforts in 2006-07. This project implements programs to identify the biological resources within several LUE planning areas – Salinas River, San Luis Obispo, South County, and Estero and North Coast within the coastal zone. It also addresses programs in the Agriculture and Open Space Element. The project implements part of program no. 10 in Table 5.

The Public Works Department has utilized the **Flood Control and Drainage Studies** for the communities listed in program 2 in Table 5, to obtain approximately \$10 million in local and grant funding for projects in the last fiscal year. For instance, The Board of Supervisors approved \$3 million for eight projects in Nipomo that are now in design. The department is continuing to discuss design and acquisition for resolving flooding problems in collaboration with property owners and the Flood Control Advisory Committee.

A **Community Separators Study** is being prepared for the Planning and Building Department to work with communities in determining the suitable image at each one's edge, the intervening rural identity and the means of achieving it, such as working with the City of San Luis Obispo to implement part of program no. 5 in Table 5.

## **Program Selection**

A critical step in implementation is working with communities and decision-makers to select the most suitable programs to fund and complete. The following list in Table 5 gives some ideas for considering since they have been in discussion, or were informally started or have importance to some groups as stakeholders already. The challenge is to determine which program should have priority ranking and how it would affect work assignments and staff resources. The budget process for the 2007-08 fiscal year will allow the opportunity to make these determinations and consider one or more of these or other programs.

**Table 5**  
**Selection of Potential General Plan Implementation Programs**  
**(high priority, short time frames)**

No.	Title	Task	Reference
1	Tree Protection Research	Research regulations and survey opinion to restore and manage rural woodland habitats and regulate removal.	County-wide; El Pomar Area Plan program 4
2	Flood Control in Cambria, Cayucos, Oceano, Santa Margarita and San Miguel	Identify the extent of flooding problems and consider means of solving problems.	Area Plans

No.	Title	Task	Reference
3	<b>Gateway Signs &amp; Park Concept Plan</b>	Create or improve community gateways and signs to convey a "visitor-friendly message.	Salinas River Area Plan, San Miguel Design Plan, #7
4	<b>Village Signs &amp; Furniture - community concepts &amp; design</b>	Develop concepts and plans for signs and street furniture in the Main Street corridor and East and West Villages.	North Coast Area Plan, Cambria Design Plan, #5
5	<b>Greenbelt, Gateways &amp; Scenic Corridors - Grants &amp; City coord.</b>	Work with San Luis Obispo on a greenbelt program and gateway corridors.	San Luis Obispo Area Plan, Ch4 #2&3
6	<b>Business Improvement Districts in Nipomo and San Miguel</b>	Establish an improvement district(s) within the downtown areas to fund facilities and maintenance.	South County Area Plan, Ch4 #11; Salinas River, Ch4, #10
7	<b>Public/Private Development on County-Owned Property</b>	Create a plan for a public park and/or plaza to be funded by a private venture within the site of the Pacific Coast Railway station.	South County Area Plan, Olde Town Plan
8	<b>Agriculture Water Supplies</b>	Establish policies to maintain water resources for production agriculture and prevent their loss to urban and suburban development.	Agriculture/Open Space Element, AGP 11
9	<b>Conversion of Agricultural Land</b>	Establish clear criteria in the LUE for maintaining the Agriculture land use category in certain conditions, to avoid new rural residential designations.	Agriculture/Open Space Element, AGP 24
10	<b>Ecosystem &amp; Corridor Program - Phase 1</b>	Identify, protect and sustain major ecosystems, including their biological diversity and natural processes.	Agriculture/Open Space Element, OSP 13,14,15
11	<b>Business Suitability Study</b>	Prepare an analysis to identify types of businesses that are suitable for each community with respect to local businesses, the labor force and housing.	Economic Element, 1.a.1
12	<b>Housing Related Amendments</b>	Prepare various amendments to implement Housing Element policies and programs.	Housing Element

### **Housing Element**

The primary purpose of the Housing Element is to facilitate the provision of needed housing. Needed housing is that which is affordable to all income groups within limits classified by State and County regulations, in particular for very low-, low- and moderate-income groups. The amount of affordable housing has become a major public issue, with the median price of housing now far above the income levels that are needed for most San Luis Obispo county residents to afford it. The Housing Element was updated by the County and then certified by the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) in 2004. The Housing Element provides information concerning the amount of land and dwelling units needed to provide a full range of housing, consistent with the HCD determination of the county's regional share of housing need in the Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP). The housing market has provided far more units that are affordable for above-moderate incomes (above \$68,900 for a family of three):



- Even with available subsidies and incentives, only 26 percent of the total housing units built in 2005-06FY were affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income families, as shown in Row 1 of Table 6.
- The number of completed units since 2001 in these ranges remains far below the RHNP goal for 2008 (Rows 2 and 3).
- However, the completed units are closer to the lower objective set by the Housing Element, starting from January, 2004 (Rows 4 and 5), considering three more years to meet the goal.
- The shortfall of affordable housing projects is partly due to the fees and time for reviewing applications, including impact fees. A survey of communities should determine their current fees and processing times for affordable projects. More land should be found where higher density zoning would be acceptable.

**Table 6**  
**Housing Goals and Production in San Luis Obispo County FY2001-05**

		<b>Very Low and Low Income</b>	<b>Moderate Income</b>	<b>Above Moderate Income</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	2005-06 Fiscal Year Completed Units	98	18	872	988
2	2001 to 2006 Completed Units	620	459	4,411	5,490
3	2001-08 Unincorporated County Share per Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP)	1,807	929	4,284	7,020
4	2004 – 2006 Completed Units	184	199	1,670	2,053
5	2004-09 5-year Unincorporated County Goals per Housing Element	924	462	2,168	3,554

### **Parks and Recreation Element**

The Parks and Recreation Element addresses the need for park land and recreation opportunities for county residents and visitors. Development of additional park land is a challenge partly in finding suitable sites that can be obtained and then maintained within budgetary limitations. During fiscal year 2005-06, the County accepted 380 acres from the Bureau of Land Management to add to the Santa Margarita Natural Area, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
**Park and Natural Areas Accepted by the County since 2000**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>
Paul Ready Park	Nipomo Area – Near Nipomo Mesa bluff	30	Dec. 2005	Future park
BLM Property	South of Santa Margarita Lake	380	April 2006	Natural Area

# Capacity of the General Plan

## Population growth 2000 - 2005

The population of the unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County, which is land outside cities, grew by 7,405 people between June, 2000 and June, 2005, according to the California Department of Finance. This population was an increase of 8 percent more than the 2000 population. For comparison, growth in the incorporated cities was 5 percent, or 3 percent less than unincorporated growth. These trends reflect the growth management policies of the cities and County and are expected to continue unless modified through policy decisions. Within the unincorporated area, this growth occurred within the rural areas and 10 communities which are designated as urban areas, as shown in Table 8 and with population projections in Appendix A. Population estimates were not calculated in fiscal year 2005-06.

**Table 8**  
**Unincorporated Area**  
**Population Growth Between 2000 and 2005**  
**and Estimated Build-out of the General Plan**

Area or Community	2000	2005	Population at Build-out of General Plan <sup>1</sup>	Projected Build-out of General Plan <sup>2</sup>
Rural Areas <sup>3</sup>	37,096	41,165	122,152	2030+
Avila Beach / Avila Valley	822	1,184	1,721	2030
Cambria	6210	6495	13,790	2020+
Cayucos	2929	3067	4,231	2030+
Los Osos	14,343	14,160	21,516	2030+
Nipomo	12,587	14,536	25,700	2030
Oceano	7,251	6,446	15,220	2030+
San Miguel	1,427	1,715	3,190	2025
Santa Margarita	1,224	1,325	1,426	2015
Shandon	984	1,027	2,245	2030
Templeton	5,972	7,225	10,102	2025
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92,845</b>	<b>100,350</b>	<b>233,239</b>	

Notes:

1. "Build-out" of the General Plan is an estimate based on typical zoning allowances for residential development and people per household. Population growth beyond build-out would require amendments to the General Plan. Based on figures in Table B, Appendix B of Inland Framework for Planning.
2. Build-out is projected to occur within five years of the first shaded date in Appendix A.
3. Group quarters are not included in Rural Areas population in this table.

## Capacity for Growth.

The General Plan has a capacity for growth that is based on potential development in the land use category maps of the Land Use Element. Other limiting maps designate features such as flood plains or habitats where constraints may reduce potential development.

Ordinances, policies such as in the California Environmental Quality Act, and permit and subdivision decisions may also impose limitations on the maximum potential allowance in the land use category maps. Although some reduction in the maximum allowance is accounted for in its estimate, “build-out” is a depiction of relatively unconstrained development given typical numbers of dwellings per acre within each land use category and the number of people per household.

As Table 8 indicates, recent population growth has been within the capacity for growth in the General Plan. Projected growth is likely to approach the capacity of community plans in the next 20 years within Santa Margarita (2015), Cambria (2020), San Miguel (2025), and Templeton (2025). However, where constraints and ordinance limitations may affect property development greatly, the capacity for growth will be lowered accordingly. A precise capacity analysis of the General Plan would involve a very detailed and rigorous application of zoning standards to individual properties, for which funding resources are not anticipated. Land use planning models can be developed to provide refined estimates as funding and technology becomes available.

The amount of projected rural population (122,152) at build-out is out of proportion to urban growth and would not achieve Smart Growth principles. Steps should be taken to educate the public on the benefits of Smart Growth principles and assess rural zoning with the public through workshops.

## *Development Services*

When any use of land or a subdivision of land is desired, the first step is to consider whether a permit is necessary for the project. The major part of activity in the Planning and Building Department is engaged in assisting applicants with information, understanding an application process and then performing the steps of reviewing an application to a final decision. Development services include this assistance in a variety of applications and processing of development permits governed by the General Plan, such as (but not limited to):

- Building permits
- Grading permits
- Land use permits
- Subdivisions
- Lot line adjustments
- Certificates of Compliance
- Agricultural preserve contracts

**The Permit Center** is where applications for construction permits and land development permits are submitted to the department for review. It is also where the general public comes for information about what they can do with their property. Almost all applications start at the Permit Center, although limited types of applications may be submitted on the Internet through the department website, [www.sloplanning.org](http://www.sloplanning.org). The Permit Center had the following contacts over the past 2005-06 fiscal year, which increased six percent from 2004-05 activity:

	<u>2004-05</u>	<u>2005-06</u>
• Appointments .....	262	136
• Walk-In Clients.....	13,971	15,028
• Letters, Emails, Etc .....	1,007	1,024
• Pre-Application Meetings .....	236	173
• Public Information Phone Calls Returned .....	4,815	5,109

## **Residential Development 2005-06**

Residential development proceeds within the allowances of the Growth Management System and the land use and building permit processes, which implement the General Plan with ordinances and procedures. The levels of residential construction activity for fiscal year (FY) 2005-06 are shown in Table 9 below. In FY 2005-06, there was a modest decline in the number of completed single family residences and mobile homes. The reduced construction activity reflects the rising mortgage interest rates and slower real estate market of the current period. The number of completed Very Low/Low Income units rose slightly, from 86 to 98 units. The number of moderate income units dropped significantly, from 181 to 18. This drop is due to the over-all costs of real estate in the county, as documented in the "Real Estate Exchange" column that appears weekly in *The Tribune* newspaper.

Until June, 2005, new residences in three communities, San Miguel, Shandon and Oceano, were sold on the open market at prices that were comparable or lower than the moderate-income price level published in the County's monthly Affordable Housing Standards bulletin. By June of 2005, the market prices for new residences in these communities had risen above the moderate income price level, as reported in *The Tribune's* Real Estate Exchange. During fiscal year 2005-06, the 18 qualified moderate income units produced were units built pursuant to the inclusionary housing requirements of the Coastal Zone, or pursuant to an exemption from the Growth Management Ordinance. These changes indicate the loss of moderate-income priced units in all County unincorporated communities, as well as a continuing significant decline in qualified, new affordable housing, as shown in Table 9. Last fiscal year, the number of new affordable dwellings actually declined to the level of 116 units produced in 2002-03. Moderate income in October, 2006 was estimated at \$68,900, which represents a wide range of employment.

**Table 9**  
**Completed New Residences**

<b>FINAL BUILDING PERMITS</b>	<b>2003-04FY</b>	<b>2004-05FY</b>	<b>2005-06FY</b>
Single-Family	991	1,008	979
Multi-Family	64	36	30
Total new units	1055	1,044	1,009
<b>Including Affordable Units:</b>			
Very Low/Low Income units	163	86	98
Moderate Income units	<u>135</u>	<u>181</u>	<u>18</u>
<b>Subtotal affordable units</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>116</b>
Residential Additions/Alterations	752	582	551

## **Non-Residential Development 2005-06**

Non-residential development in the form of commercial, industrial and public building permits, as well as grading projects increased slightly in FY2005-06, as shown in Table 10. However, the value of commercial and public projects was much lower, returning to values achieved before the 2004-05 fiscal year.

**Table 10**  
**Completed Non-residential Development**

<b>FINAL BUILDING PERMITS</b>	<b>2003-04FY</b>	<b>2004-05FY</b>	<b>2005-06FY</b>
Commercial/Public	131	71	99
Commercial Additions/Alterations	103	78	82
Grading	168	151	161
Miscellaneous	1,367	1,180	1,221
Commercial/Public valuation	\$23 million	\$39 million	\$21 million

**Other Types of Applications**

During FY2005-06, there were 754 decisions on discretionary types of applications, such as land use permits and subdivision applications, as listed in Table 11 by the type of decision maker and permit or action.

- The Board of Supervisors considered 16 percent more actions than in 2004-05, due to continued increases in appeals, and a return to previous years' numbers of agricultural preserve applications.
- The Planning Commission continued to hold fewer Conditional Use Permit hearings, but it considered more subdivisions than previous years.
- The Subdivision Review Board heard 36 percent more parcel map applications.
- Administrative hearings under the authority of the Planning Director remained lower than previous years overall.

**Table 11**  
**Development Applications Other Than Construction Permits**

<b><u>Decision Body and Type of Actions</u></b>	<b><u>Fiscal Year</u></b>		
	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
<b>Board of Supervisors</b>			
General Plan/Ordinance Amendments	28	36	23
Agricultural Preserves	10	9	21
Appeals	31	40	64
Consent Items	66	71	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Planning Commission</b>			
Conditional Use Permits	44	37	35
Minor Use Permits	8	8	3
Tract Maps	22	36	44

<b><u>Decision Body and Type of Actions</u></b>	<b><u>Fiscal Year</u></b>		
	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
General Plan/Ord. Amendments	24	15	14
Variances	5	3	3
Appeals	2	3	5
Consent Items (time ext, GP conformity reports)	43	50	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Subdivision Review Board</b>			
Parcel Maps	55	56	76
Lot Line Adjustments – Coastal	16	17	12
Conditional Certificates	19	10	5
Consent Items (time ext, public lots)	35	29	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Planning Director Hearings –</b>			
Minor Use Permits			
Residential Single Family	50	38	36
Residential Additions	36	33	29
Residential Multi Family	5	4	2
Commercial/Industrial/Office	24	18	12
Miscellaneous	84	77	83
Road names	33	11	11
Lot Line Adjustments – Inland	38	35	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>Other Actions</b>			
Certificates of Compliance	51	65	35
Voluntary Mergers	276	114	50
Site Plan Reviews	2	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Total All Actions</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>754</b>

# Appendix A

San Luis Obispo County Population Projections, June, 2005							
PLANNING AREA or Community	Population in Households (Group Quarters not included)						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>ADELAIDA</b>	3030	3200	3638	4136	4703	5347	6079
<b>EL POMAR / ESTRELLA</b>	7099	8152	9450	10956	12701	14723	17068
<b>ESTERO</b>	28603	28730	30721	33288	35276	37394	39653
Morro Bay	10152	10313	10759	11224	11709	12215	12743
Cayucos	2929	3067	3176	3289	3405	3526	3651
Los Osos	14343	14160	15566	17525	18879	20338	21910
Estero (Rural)	1179	1190	1220	1251	1282	1315	1348
<b>HUASNA-LOPEZ</b>	798	898	1041	1207	1399	1622	1880
<b>LAS PILITAS</b>	1313	1384	1440	1499	1560	1623	1689
<b>LOS PADRES</b>	309	318	341	365	392	420	450
<b>NACIMIENTO</b>	2778	3147	3357	3563	3782	4015	4261
<b>NORTH COAST</b>	7053	7344	7487	7851	8233	8634	9055
Cambria	6210	6495	6613	6950	7304	7677	8069
North Coast (Rural)	843	849	875	901	929	957	986
<b>SALINAS RIVER</b>	61306	68702	74821	80789	86699	92872	99305
Atascadero	24884	25944	27267	28658	30120	31657	33271
Paso Robles	23223	27577	30807	33681	36284	39088	42109
San Miguel	1427	1715	2295	2901	3530	4295	5225
Santa Margarita	1224	1325	1384	1469	1583	1705	1837
Templeton	5972	7225	7977	8807	9724	10475	11010
Salinas River (Rural)	4576	4916	5090	5271	5458	5652	5853
<b>SAN LUIS BAY</b>	48757	50506	53369	55971	58597	61360	64267
Arroyo Grande	15550	16327	17160	18035	18955	19922	20938
Avila Beach / Avila Valley	822	1184	1327	1450	1555	1667	1787
Grover Beach	12924	13102	13797	14216	14648	15093	15551
Oceano	7251	7446	7826	8144	8391	8646	8908
Pismo Beach	8523	8617	9133	9680	10260	10874	11525
San Luis Bay (Rural)	3687	3830	4126	4445	4788	5158	5557
<b>SAN LUIS OBISPO</b>	45613	46285	48741	51330	54059	56936	59969
San Luis Obispo (City)	42188	42657	44833	47120	49523	52050	54705
San Luis Obispo (Rural)	3425	3628	3908	4210	4536	4886	5264
<b>SHANDON-CARRIZO</b>	2425	2513	2781	3105	3579	4170	4911
Shandon	984	1027	1242	1511	1929	2462	3142
Shandon-Carrizo (Rural)	1441	1486	1539	1593	1650	1708	1769
<b>SOUTH COUNTY</b>	21205	23708	26376	29357	32690	36418	40589
Nipomo	12587	14536	16446	18607	21052	23819	26949
South County (Rural)	8618	9172	9930	10750	11638	12599	13640
<b>COUNTY TOTAL (Households Only)</b>	230289	244887	263564	283417	303670	325535	349176

Incorporated Cities	137444	144537	153756	162615	171500	180899	190843
Unincorporated Area	92845	100350	109807	120802	132170	144636	158333
<b>GROUP QUARTERS (2)</b>							
Incorporated Cities	4816	4462	4462	4462	4462	4462	4462
Unincorporated Area	10755	11378	11378	11378	11378	11378	11378
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	245860	260727	279404	299257	319510	341375	365016

Note: Shading indicates population growth that would require an amendment to the general plan